

# The Life and Teachings of Guru Amardas Ji

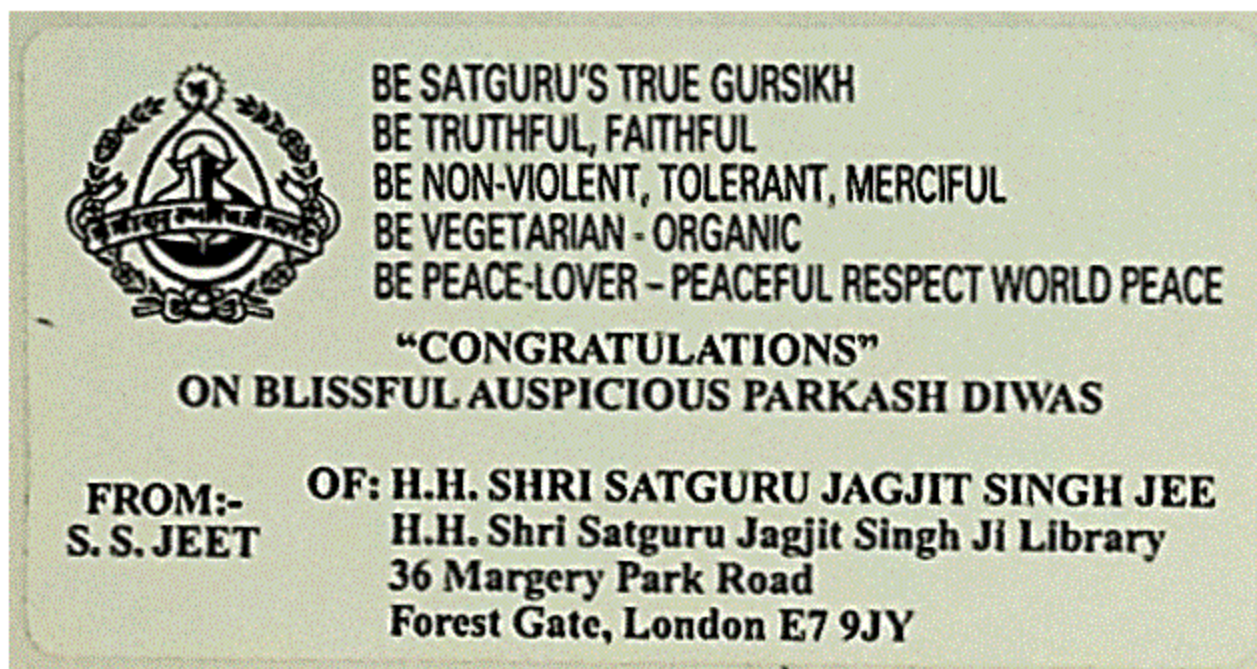


For the daily morning bath of Guru Angad Dev Ji, Baba Amar Das fetched a full pitcher of water from River Beas every day.

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# **THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SRI GURU AMARDAS JI**

by

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# **Acknowledgements**

During the year of the 500th birth anniversary of the third Master many renowned philosophers and historians have paid glowing tributes to the Guru for his magnificent achievements on human rights for women, equality of mankind and in spreading the message of Guru Nanak. Even Emperor Akbar bowed his head in reverence to the Guru's exalted personality.

The Sikh Missionary Society, whose mission is to bring the message of Guru Nanak nearer to our children, felt urgent need to bring out a booklet on the life and teachings of Guru Amar Das.

We are greatly indebted to Dr. Gobind Singh Mansukhani; who has fulfilled this need in writing this short but candid description on the work and philosophy of the Great Guru. Dr. Mansukhani is an established authority on the Sikh History and Philosophy and is the author of numerous books on Sikh History for Children and many publications for serious and inquisitive readers.

We are grateful to the Shromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar for allowing the use of the portrait of Guru Amardas on the title page.

We thank our Sangat for the wholehearted support which has always encouraged us to carry on this task.

2nd December 1979

Hon. General Secretary

## **Second Edition**

This is the second edition of the book. It has been reprinted, but some pictures have been added. The cover photograph of the Third MASTER has been printed in colour and for the benefit of our young readers, it has a new type setting in bold letters.

I am indebted munificent Sadh Sanget and our members for their donations and whole hearted support for reprinting the second edition of this book.

APRIL 1990

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# SRI GURU AMARDAS

## I. HIS LIFE

Bhai Amardas was born on 5th May 1479 at Basarkay in Amritsar district. His father Tejbhan Bhalla was a middle class farmer and trader. His mother Bhakht Kaur, also called Sulakhni, was a homely and pious lady. Born in a typical Vaishnava family, Amardas followed its traditional religious practices, and abstained from meat. At the age of twenty-four he married Mansa Devi. In due course, he had two sons – Mohri and Mohan, and two daughters – Dani and Bhani. He was religiously inclined and followed the Vaishnava mode of worship. From the age of forty-two, he started going to Hardwar for pilgrimage every year. After the death of his father (in 1553), he became the head of the family.

In 1541, Amardas as usual proceeded to Hardwar for pilgrimage. On his return journey, he met a monk who got very friendly with him. Both shared a meal and began a religious discussion. During the conversation, the monk – some say he was a Brahamchari devotee – asked Amardas the name of his Guru. Amardas replied that he had no Guru. The monk was much upset by the answer and expressed his regret for having taken food from one who had no Guru. He further added that he had committed a sin by sharing a meal with a Guru-less person and as such he would have to go again to Hardwar for washing away his sin. Amardas reflected on the remark of the monk and realised the need of a Guru. He felt that he had wasted twenty-one years in pilgrimage and achieved nothing on the spiritual plane. Moreover, the label of *Beguru Nigura* (Guru-Less person) given by the monk to Amardas was a source of constant humiliation to him. So Amardas began his search for a Guru in right earnest.

As soon as Amardas reached home, he began to reflect over his sad plight and inner tension. He could hardly sleep during that night. Lost in his anxiety over the restless condition of his mind, he turned frequently from one side to another in his bed. Fortunately, early at dawn he heard a sweet and inspiring song sung by his nephew's wife – Bibi Amro. He listened to the hymn attentively and reflected on the meaning of the words. Amro had learnt the hymn from her father – Guru Angad Dev – who lived in Khadur. Amardas realised that the hymn summed up his real condition and the need of a Guru for gaining

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peace of mind and spiritual comfort.

The hymn is as follows:

“Conduct is the paper and mind is the inkpot. Good and bad deeds are the writs recorded thereon. As the past deeds drive the man, so he walks. O God! There is no limit to Thy excellence. The body is the furnace and the mind is the iron therein. The fires of five passions heat it up. The mind turned into dross is again transmuted into gold, if the philosopher’s stone, like the Guru is met. The Guru blesses man with ambrosial Name of the Lord and then the body and body and mind become stable.” (p.990)\*

As he heard the melody and understood its message, he felt comforted. The sweet and inspiring words soothed his mind. He asked Bibi Amro about the composer of the hymn. She told him that this was the composition of Guru Nanak who had passed away and nominated her father – Guru Angad – as the second Guru of the Sikhs. Amardas requested her to take him immediately to her father at Khadur. She complied with his wish and both of them reached Khadur after a few hours.

## APPRENTICESHIP

The first meeting of Amardas – aged 62 – with Guru Angad, now 37, was a sort of love and devotion at first sight. He heard Guru Angad’s instructions attentively and regarded him as his spiritual guide. He took up the *Sadhana* (spiritual effort) very seriously. First, he engaged himself in *Sewa* – voluntary service. Rising early in the morning, he brought water for Guru Angad’s bath; then he joined the congregation and later did manual work in the Free Kitchen – *Langar* – for most of the day. He studied *Punjabi* and *Gurbani* (hymns) and followed the Sikh way of life. Macauliffe mentions Amardas’ routine as under:

“He rose at Goindwal a watch before day and proceeded to the river Beas to take water to Khadur for the Guru to bathe. Meanwhile, he repeated the *Japji* and generally finished it half-way between Goindwal and Khadur. After hearing the *Asa-Ki-Var* in Khadur, he fetched water for the Guru’s kitchen, scrubbed the cooking utensils and brought fire-wood from the forest. Every evening he listened to the *Sodar* and the daily vespers and then shampooed the Guru. After putting him to rest, he returned to Goindwal, walking backwards in his supreme reverence for his spiritual master. The half-way spot where he used every morning to finish the *Japji* is called the *Dandama* or

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\* The number given in brackets refers to the page of the Adi Granth.



or breathing place”.\*

Meanwhile, Bhai Jetha – who later succeeded Guru Amardas – being then an orphan, moved with his grand-mother from Lahore to Basarkay in 1541. He came in contact with Bhai Amardas who lived in the same village. The latter took him to Khadur from time to time for meetings with Guru Angad. When the Guru ordered Bhai Amardas to shift to Goindwal in order to repopulate and develop the village, his close associate – Bhai Jetha – too moved to Goindwal in 1546.

One stormy, wintry night in January 1552, when Bhai Amardas was carrying water for Guru Angad, he stumbled on a weaver's hole in the ground and got injured. Even so, he mustered courage and brought the pail of water safe but late for the Guru's bath. It is said that the weaver's wife, who had used disrespectful words for both Guru Angad and Bhai Amardas, lost her wits, but recovered later with the Guru's blessing. Realising the intense devotion of Bhai Amardas, Guru Angad decided to confer the succession on Amardas. During the twelve years of devoted service, in a spirit of humility and dedication, Amardas had proved himself worthy of being an ideal Sikh. Guru Angad blessed Amardas and nominated him as the Third Guru of the Sikhs in 1552. He affirmed:

“Amardas is neither poor nor homeless. He shall be the home of the homeless, the shelter for the shelterless, and the protector of the weak and the down-trodden. Thus Guru Amardas gained a permanent home in the hearts of the Sikhs. As Guru Angad Dev merged into the Divine Essence, the throne of Guruship was occupied by Guru Amardas.”

The sons of Guru Angad were annoyed at their supersession. Dasu was pacified by his mother and decided to keep quiet, but Datu declared himself as Guru. He kicked Guru Amardas in the congregation and told him to leave Goindwal. Guru Amardas in all humility kissed Datu's foot, saying:

“My bones are hard. They may have injured your foot.” Quietly at night, Guru Amardas left for Basarkay, his native village. In the morning, the Sikhs did not find him at Goindwal and they searched the countryside. Meanwhile at Goindwal, no one came to Datu to pay respects as the Guru. In despair, Datu returned to Khadur. Meanwhile Baba Budha traced Guru Amardas who was hiding in a small

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\* Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion II P.35



house in Basarkay. On the persistent request of his followers, he agreed to return to Goindwal and guide them as their Guru.

### **GURU AMARDAS (1552-74)**

Guru Amardas carried on the mission of his predecessors with great sincerity and devotion. He set before the Sikhs the ideal of *Sewa* and honest living. He earned his own livelihood by personal effort. According to Latif, a Muslim historian: "He never ate anything from the Guru's storehouse, but supported himself by small sums of money which he earned by trading in salt and oil in the market."\* When he was asked why he did not eat what the Sikhs ate in the Free Kitchen, he replied: "Whatever the Sikhs eat nourishes me too, for there is no difference at all between us." At another time, he told the congregation that just as a mother feels happy to see her children eat and relish delicacies, in the same way the Guru feels happy when the Sikhs - his children - dine together.

### **BHANI'S MARRIAGE**

The Guru's wife - Bibi Ramoji - was keen to get her youngest daughter married, as she had reached the age of puberty. Guru Amardas asked her what kind of groom she desired for her simple and pious girl. She pointed to Bhai Jetha who was standing at some distance indicating that someone like him would be suit-able for Bibi Bhani. The Guru replied: "He (Jetha) is his own parallel, for God has made none other like unto him."\*\* Both Guru Amardas and his wife agreed that Bhai Jetha - who was later to become Guru Ramdas - was a suitable match for Bhani. They formally made the proposal to him and he was overcome with joy. The wedding took place at Goindwal early in 1553. Guru Ramdas later composed the following hymn of thanks-giving to God:

"The Lord has accomplished the work; he has come to wed a holy bride." (p.775)

### **MISSIONARY TOUR**

In 1553, Guru Amardas undertook a missionary journey to the eastern and south-eastern parts of the Punjab. He first visited Kurukshetra

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- \* Mahomed Latif: History of Punjab, p.250
  - \*\* Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, p.91



way to the thousands of pilgrims who had gathered there. It is wrong to say, as some biased historians have written, that Guru Amardas undertook the pilgrimage to holy places to appease the the Hindus who were alleged to have been dissatisfied with his rejection of caste restrictions and ancient rituals. The Guru preached to the crowds that the Abhaijit solar eclipse was a natural phenomenon and there was no merit gained by fasting and bathing on this occasion. The best pilgrimage is bathing inwardly in the Holy Name. Guru Ramdas subsequently composed a hymn to expound the message to Guru Amardas to the congregation at Kurukshetra, Jamna, Hardwar and places en route.

“A sight of the true Guru (Amardas) is the real bathing of the Abhaijit festival” (p.1116). “The true pilgrimage is meditation on the Holy Name and a dip in the divine nectar” (p.687). Huge crowds followed the Guru’s party because the tax-collectors did not collect the pilgrim-tax from he Guru. The rush was great at Hardwar where the local gentry gathered in a central place to hear the Guru’s discourse.\* The Guru also held discussions with Yogis, Jain Digambers, Sanyasis and the exponents of the six systems of Indian philosophy and won their love and respect.\*\*

## BAOLI SAHIB

The violent opposition of the caste-conscious Hindus of Goindwal to the egalitarian principles and practices of the Third Guru led to their breaking the pots of and stoning the Sikhs who went to the village well for fetching water. Guru Amardas ordered the excavation of a deep well - *Baoli Sahab* - in 1556 to provide a source of water for his followers and the depressed classes. The annoyance of the local Hindus and Khatri increased, because a large number of the Sikhs from different parts of the country came to Goindwal to participate in the construction of the well. Bhai Jetha - the Guru’s son-in-law - took an active part, not minding the carrying of baskets of earth, lime and stone on his head. When his relatives protested to Guru Amardas for permitting cooly-work to be done by his son-in-law, Bhai Jetha apologised to the Guru on their behalf. When the *Baoli Sahab* was completed in 1559, Guru Amardas held a big celebration and invited all the people of the neighbourhood to a feast. One of the jealous Hindus, called Tappa, first rejected the Guru’s invitation, but tempted by a money-offering sent his son rather late who broke his leg while jumping over the

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\* G. S. Mansukhani: Guru Ramdas, p.32

\*\* There is a Gurdwara at Kankhal in memory of the Guru’s visit



boundary-wall to join the feast. Guru Ramadas referred to this incident in a hymn as under:

“All the village elders began to laugh, saying that the wave of greed has over-taken Tappa” (p.315).

## MEETING WITH THE YOGIS

Kingrinath with his band of Nath Yogis came to Guru Amardas at Goindwal. He held a discussion with the Guru on Yoga. The Guru told him what true Yoga is, through a hymn, as follows:

“O Yogi! Put on the rings of modesty in your ears and make compassion your patched coat. Apply fear of birth and death to your body as ashes, then shall you conquer the three worlds. Strike such strains on your harp, O Yogi, that it may emit the celestial melody and you may be absorbed in God's love.

Make truth your platter, and contentment your wallet. Put the embrosial Name therein as your food” (p.908).

The Yogis were much impressed by the Guru's words. The Guru felt that the cult of Yoga and renunciation was unsuited to the needs of the times. Moreover, it gave no peace of mind nor banished man's ego. He said, “What if a man lives naked, discarding clothes? What if a Yogi wears matted hair? Of what avail is the holding of the breath in the Tenth Gate, if the mind is not purified?” (p.1169).

The Guru emphasises control over the mind through meditation in place of spiritual austerities.

## PRESERVATION OF LIFE

Guru Amardas greatly valued human life and regarded it as a wonderful opportunity for working towards salvation. The body is the temple of God and as such, it should be looked after and not mutilated or mortified. The Guru emphasised the needs of good health and the avoidance of unnecessary risks. One day as the Guru approached a dilapidated house, he rode quickly past it. When the Sikhs saw this, they question him if he was afraid of death. He replied in the negative and explained that human life must be duly preserved. If we protect the body and look after it, we can perform holy and charitable works. The body which can confer benefit on oneself and others, must be cherished by all. He elaborated the idea with a simile. Just as a tree, if

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preserved will bear blossom and fruit, in the same way, if the body is cared for, it can practise charity and meditation.\*

## LANGAR INSTITUTIONALISED

Guru Amardas developed *Langar* (Free Kitchen) into an institution for service of the community and for channelling the charities of the Sikhs. Moreover, he made it compulsory for everyone to eat in the Free Kitchen, before he could meet the Guru or join the congregation. His directive became a maxim – *Pahlay Pangat, Pichhay Sangat*: first take a meal in the Community Kitchen and then join the congregation. *Langar* not only broke the caste barriers on account of the inter-dining of the Hindus, Moslems and Shudras, but also rejected taboos about ritual cooking in plastered or purified spots.

Guru Amardas *Langar* was open most of the day and night. According to one writer, all types of dishes were served: sweet, saltish, sour, bitter, pungent and astringent. The rations were supplied by the devotees in plenty and there was no shortage of foodstuffs at any time. Balwand and Satta – the court musicians – have made a special mention of the Guru's *Langar*, as stated below:

“Ever in your Kitchen, butter and flour are served (in plenty)” (p.986).

The food was prepared and distributed to the rich and the poor alike, while they took their seats in a row on the carpeted ground. Whatever was left over was given to the birds and animals and even to the fish in the river Beas, flowing close by.

Emperor Akbar and the Raja of Haripur (Kangra hills) who came to meet Guru Amardas followed the tradition and took food with the ordinary men seated in a line in the Free Kitchen. When Akbar talked to the Guru, he offered land for the maintenance of the Kitchen, but the Guru did not accept it, saying that it is a Sikh institution and must be supported by the offerings and services of the disciples.

## CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH AKBAR

The tolerant and liberal policy of emperor Akbar was to some extent responsible for the cordial relations between the Sikh Gurus and the Muslim gentry. Akbar had a regard for holy men of all faiths.

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\* Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, P.73



Earlier, he was called upon to give a decision on a complaint filed by some orthodox Brahmins and Khatri against Guru Amardas for rejecting age-old Hindu caste-practices and taboos. Guru Amardas sent Bhai Jetha to Lahore, who explained the egalitarian and liberal principles of Sikhism to the emperor. Akbar dismissed the petition in 1566. Failing in this attempt, Gond Khatri and his agent filed another false petition, that the Guru had illegally occupied the land belonging to them. This claim was also rejected because it was proved that the Guru was in lawful possession of the land at Gindwal. Guru Ramdas later composed a hymn and referred to this incident:

“The apostate was sent to slander and back-bite others, but there too, the faces of both the perverse persons were got blackened” (p.306).

As mentioned earlier, Akbar took food in the community Kitchen at Goindwal and was pleased with the arrangements of the mess. At the suggestion of the Guru, he remitted the land-revenue for the Lahore district for one year on account of the considerable fall in grain prices. The peasants became very happy and thanked Guru Amardas for his good offices.\*

## CONSOLIDATION OF THE SIKH CHURCH

The major contribution of Guru Amardas was the propagation of the message of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad and the consolidation and extension of missionary work. In order to give a momentum to missionary activity, Guru Amardas appointed his representatives for each region of India. These regions or dioceses were called *Manjis*, literally means cots, because the person in charge sat on a cot. These regions, were further divided into small units called *Piris* (small stools). So a number of missionary centres, each in charge of a devoted Sikh, were set up in different places all over the country. There are three lists on *Manjis*, first of *Mehma Prakash*, second of Gurdwara Haveli Sahab picture, and the third of Bhai Kahan Singh.\*\* If the different centres mentioned in the three lists are taken into consideration, the number goes up to forty. However, historians have agreed on the total of twenty-two centres, perhaps on the ground that the Mughal empire consisted of twenty-two provinces. As Guru Amardas was regarded as the spiritual king, his jurisdiction was also divided into twenty-two dioceses.

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\* G.S. Mansukhani: Guru Ramdas, p.30

\*\* Balbar Singh: Amar Kavi Guru Amardas, p.57



However, the thirteen centres mentioned in all the lists may be regarded as fairly correct. These centres and their missionaries are as under:

1. Bhai Paro Jhulka called Param Hans in charge of Doaba region;
2. Bhai Lalu in charge of Sind and the West Coast;
3. Bhai Mahesha Dhir in charge of a part of Malwa region;
4. Bhai Maidas Vairagi in charge of a part of Malwa region;
5. Bhai Manak Chand Jeewra who did great service at the excavation site of *Baoli Sahab*, in charge of Vairawal;
6. Bhai Sawan Mal, the Gurur's nephew in charge of Haipur and Kangra region;
7. Bhai Hindal who did service in the Free Kitchen at Goindwal, in charge of Jandiala region;
8. Sach Nisach who did service in the Free Kitchen at Goindwal, in charge of the Ambala region;
9. Bhai Gangu Shah, once a banker in Delhi, in charge of Lahore region;
10. Bhai Sadharan, an iron-smith, in charge of Bakala region;
11. Mutho-Murari, a devoted coule, in charge of Chunia, near Lahore;
12. Bhai Firya in charge of Kashmir and Mirpur regions;
13. Bhai Kheda in charge of Ferozepur region;

It is also mentioned that one *Manji* was given to Allahyar – a Muslim devotee of the Guru, living in Lahore. In addition, two *Manjis* were allotted to women – Mai Sewa of Goindwal and Bibi Bhago of Kashmir.

## SOME DEVOTEES

Bhai Sawan Mal, the son of Guru Amardas' brother was a devoted Sikh. He was sent to Haripur in the Kangra hills to arrange for the supply of timber for the construction of buildings in Goindwal. His humanism and spiritual wisdom endeared him to the Raja of Haripur who came to Goindwal and became a follower of the Guru.

Gangu Shah, a Khatri merchant of Lahore, suffered losses in business and came to Goindwal to seek the Guru's blessing. The Guru said to him: "Go to Delhi and start your business. Remember God and help the needy and you will be wealthy". A needy Brahmin sought

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financial aid from Guru Amardas for his daughter's marriage. The Guru gave him a letter for Gangu Shah, asking him to help the Brahmin. Wealth had made Gangu arrogant and miserly. He thought that if he helped the Brahmin, the Guru might send other men also to him for help. So he told the Brahmin that he could not do anything for him. The Brahmin returned disappointed to Goindwal. The Guru told the congregation to collect funds and also himself contributed some amount towards the marriage expenses of the Brahmin's daughter. After some time, Gangu suffered losses in business, and returned to Goindwal empty-handed. He dared not show his face to Guru Amardas; so he served in the *Langar* for all the time. One day, the Guru called him and blessed him. He was put in charge of the mission at Lahore for the rest of his life.

Bhai Paro Jhulka – also called Parma Hans – belonged to Dalla village in the Doaba region. He used to visit Goindwal every day by crossing the river Beas. Guru Amardas was much pleased with his humility and devotion and desired to nominate him as his successor. Bhai Paro declined this honour, saying: "I am content with being the Guru's disciple, because I have received the treasure of the Holy Name". The Nawab (Governor) of Jallundur, named Abdullah became a Sikh, because he was impressed by the ideal living of Bhai Paro.

Baini, a learned Pandit, came to Guru Amardas and mentioned the advantages of austerities and sacrifices mentioned in the Hindu scriptures. He also paraded his knowledge of Sanskrit books. The Guru did not like his vanity and display of scholarship. The Guru said to him: "He alone is a real Pandit who casts off the load of three *gunas*" (p.1261). Guru Amardas emphasised that austerities and rituals prescribed for the previous three *yugas* are impossible in *kalyuga*. Devotion and remembrance of the Holy Word is most beneficial in this age. *Naam* gives bliss and opens the door of salvation.

The Guru told Baini that his followers are family-men. The Sikhs are enjoined to lead family life and devote themselves to good deeds and the Holy Word. They live in the world and yet remain detached from its attachments and *pull* of *maya*. The Guru said: "They are true house-holders whose minds are concentrated on Truth". (p.230)

Baini became the Guru's follower and was regarded as a good preacher.

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## TRAINING AND SUCCESSION OF BHAI JETHA

Bhai Jetha, the Guru's son-in-law, proved himself a true and devoted Sikh. He had been in close touch with the Guru from 1546. After shifting to Goindwal, he served the Guru and the *Sangat* (congregation) at *Baoli Sahab*. Guru Amardas decided to establish a big centre of religion and trade at a new place for the Sikhs. So he deputed Bhai Jetha to find a suitable site close to the trade routes. Bhai Jetha purchased land from the Zamindars of Gumtula, Tung and Sultanwind and developed it. It came to be known as *Chak Guru* and later *Ramdaspur*. He collected a large number of masons, carpenters and iron-smith for the construction of residential buildings and shops. Soon a market sprang up, which to this day is called *Guru-Ka-Bazar*. A Free Kitchen – langar – was set up for the workers and the artisans. Bhai Jetha, though busy with the planning and construction work of the township, organised missionary work and delivered discourses to the congregations held at the site. The construction work which started in 1570 was interrupted for some time and restarted in 1576. The excavation of the tank – *Amritsar* – began in 1577 and was completed in 1581.\*

Guru Amardas felt that his end was approaching and so he must select a successor. He devised a test to select the best Sikh as the next Guru. The two serious contenders were his two sons-in-law. He asked both of them to construct a platform according to his specification. Rama, the elder son-in-law, and Bhai Jetha, the other son-in-law, started the construction of separate platforms. When these were ready Guru Amardas inspected them and rejected them. He asked them to demolish the platforms and build new ones again. For three times he disapproved of the platforms built by both of them separately. Rama refused to build the platform for the fourth time; Bhai Jetha, however, completed the platform and it was rejected again. So he continued his efforts. When he built the platform for the seventh time, Guru Amardas approved of it and decided to select him as the successor because of his patience and devotion. He called the congregation and seated Bhai Jetha on the throne of Guruship, as *Guru Ramdas* – the Fourth Guru of the Sikhs. Balwand and Satta composed the following coronation ode:

“You are Nanak. You are Angad. You are Guru Amardas, so do we regard you; deeming you as the Transcendental Lord, your followers and the congregation bow before you”. (p.969)

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\* G. S. Mansukhani: *Guru Ramdas*, p.32



Guru Amadas passed away at Goindwal on 1st September 1573. His mantle fell on the shoulders of Guru Ramdas.

## II. HIS WORK AND PERSONALITY

### HIS COMPOSITIONS

Guru Amardas composed his hymns in 17 Ragas and their total number is 874. He wrote 171 Chaupadas, 91 other Padas including Ashtapadas, Chhants, 430 Salokas, 85 Pauris and 97 Pauris of special compositions like *Kafi*, *Patti*, *Alahaniya*, *Satvara*, *Anand* and *Sohilay*. The different types of poems and the use of different ragas show his keen sense of welding melody to poetic technique.

His well-chosen diction offers an insight into his mind and soul. At the same time, his words reflect the ethos, the culture and the tradition of the Sikh Faith. Though apparently the words have a connotation and significance, they throw ample light on the personality of the author and the philosophy of his time and the *milieu*. Above all, apart from the semantic nuances of phrases, there is the echo of psychological reflection and intuitive visions as we go into their deeper study.

Let us, for example, take the *Ananad Sahab* which has a special place in his compositions. Though idealism and a vision of man's ultimate goal of bliss are presented here, it touches very often the reality of contemporary life, the ritual – Karam-kand – the hypocrisy of the outwardly religious, the fallacy of outer cleanliness and purity of the so-called holy living.

The aim of devotional poetry is not giving delight to the mind or the satisfaction of the reader's aesthetic taste, but the revelation of higher values and a glimpse of the ultimate destiny of man. Western thinkers have realised that the function of sacred or higher poetry is the affirmation of universal truths and moral values. In the *Anand Sahab*, Guru Amardas deals with man's quest for happiness and how to obtain true bliss. A human being has a body, mind and soul. All the three are interlinked. The Body is the chariot; the Mind is the charioteer; the Soul is the owner of the chariot, while the sense-organs are the horses and desire is the road. The soul and the mind are subject to the tendencies of the sense-organs. The soul is a part of Divinity. Man cannot realise his divine element on account of the veil of Maya. He regards himself as separate from God. This obvious superstition or duality is removed by the Guru. The Guru makes man realise his divine

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nature. He becomes *Gurmukh* or *Sanmukh*. The others are the worldly wise: those who follow their self or ego. They are called *Manmukh* or *Bemukh*. They are overwhelmed by worldliness. They direct their sense-organs – eyes, ears and tongue – towards mundane and evil pursuits and not towards spiritual efforts – *Sadhana*. The control of sense-organs and total surrender to the Will of God and constant meditation is needed to enter the Mansion of Bliss. God – the Ocean of Bliss – is man's ultimate goal and destination.

## PROSODY

The Guru's poetic style is flexible and varied. He uses different numbers of *padas* in *Chhants* and *Sohilay*. In his *Patti*, *Alahaniya* and *Anand*, he does not slavishly follow the rules of prosody; rather he modifies them according to the nature of the theme and feeling. Like a seasoned poet, he uses images, symbols and figures of speech to highlight his message. The images of the love-torn bride and the pied cuckoo – *Babeeha* (p.1282) – are taken directly from every-day life. Metaphors and similis are found in God's plenty. So also we come across a number of gems of alliterative poetry:

“Har jeev Nirmal Nirmala Mirmal mum vasa” (p.426).

“Maya mamta mohini” (p.643).

“Gahir Gambhir Gunee Gaheer” (p.1234).

“Sahijay Sach Samai” (p.1249).

## HIS MUSIC

Guru Amardas knew many more *ragas* than those used by him for his hymns. Though he has not used Kedara raga, he had referred to it in Var Maru:

“Among melodies, Kedara is deemed good, O brother, if through it one loves the Name and one associates with the Saint's society and enshrines affection for the True Lord” (p.1087).

Guru Amardas has made a reference to *Gujri raga*. This raga was first formulated by Raja Man Singh Tomar of Gwailor, in honour of his Queen who belonged to the Gujar caste which is supposed to be a comparatively low caste. Just as the Raja transformed a peasant woman into queen, in the same way the Guru can change a common man into an ideal man – a man of God:



“Low is the caste of the milk-maid, but when she ponders over the Guru’s hymns, and night and day repeats God’s Name, she attains to her Spouse” (p.516).

*Bilawal* which literally means bliss becomes truly felicitous, when it is used as a medium for meditation:

“Beauteous is Bilawal’s melody and tune, if through the Guru’s word, one fixes his attention on the Lord” (p.849).

In *Wadahans* raga, the Guru makes a pun on the word *Wadahans* to high-light the efficacy of this raga. If it is used for singing the praise of the Lord of Truth, one becomes a supreme swan – one endowed with discrimination to sift water from milk and falsehood from truth.

“Those who are imbued with the Divine World and clasp the True Name to their hearts are the great swans” (p.585).

Similarly, *Ramkali* which literally means the bud of God will blossom into the blooming lotus, if it is used for singing the Holy Name:

“Through *Ramakali* raga, I have enshrined the Lord in my mind and have become embellished. When by the Guru’s word, my heart-lotus blossomed, the Lord blessed me with the treasure of His devotion” (p.950).

Guru Amardas avoided using ragas like *Deepak*, *Hindol* and *Megh* which are against the spirit of Kirtan. After all Kirtan is intended to lead man to spiritual development and salvation:

“Through the infinite hymns of the Guru, day and night, I ever sing the praise of the Lord” (p.593).

“In this dark age, singing of God’s praise is indeed a beacon – light for the world” (p.145).

“When I sang the Lord’s praises, the Divine light was kindled and I was shown the way” (p.86).

## MISSIONARY WORK

Guru Amardas realised the importance of building up the Mansion of Sikhism and making it solid and second to none. He organised missionary work throughout India with the help of his devoted Sikhs. The

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*Manjis* were established wherever there was a sizeable population of his devotees. Moreover, he issued a directive that all the Sikhs would assemble twice a year either at the Guru's centre or at the *Manji* of their area. on the first day of Baisakh (April), and at Diwali festival (November) Goindwal became a place of Sikh gatherings after the construction of *Baoli Sahab*. Moreover, the sanctity attached to this spot on account of its long association with the Third Guru made it a kind of holy place, as an alternative to Hardwar.

Guru Amardas took steps to keep the *Udasi* sect separate from Sikhism. There was a basic difference between the two sections. The Sikhs believed in family-life, while the Udasis believed in celibacy. The Udasis wanted to join Sikhism on their own terms to which the Guru did not agree. Narang observes in his connection: "The Sikhs were once for all separated from *Udasis*, and raised above asceticism, were free and fit to follow their course of national progress".\*

Guru Amardas laid down Sikh ceremonies, so as to make Sikhs distinct from the Hindus. He prescribed the marriage ceremony, when one of his Sikhs, Bhai Dayala, complained to him that the Brahmins had refused to perform his daughter's marriage. Guru Amardas made the recitation of *Anand Sahab* and *Ardas* compulsory for a Sikh wedding. The new ceremony "constituted a distinct break with Hinduism".\*\*

Similarly, Guru Amardas gave special directions for a Sikh funeral, when he was to leave his mortal coil. His grandson – Bhai Sundar – has mentioned the funeral ceremony in *Sadd* (p.923) of the *Adi Granth*. Hymns in praise of God are to be sung before and after the cremation. No pandit, no lamps, and no immersion of the ashes in any holy river is necessary for the funeral ceremony of a Sikh. Moreover, there is to be no crying or lamination, because death is a natural and inexorable event and takes place according to the Will of God.

Guru Amardas had obtained a collection of the hymns of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad from the second Guru when he succeeded the latter in 1552. To these he added his own compositions. This *Pothi* was later given by him to his son Mohan and it therefore was called *Mohan Pothi*. It was this collection of hymns which Guru Arjan obtained from Baba Mohan when he wanted to compile the *Adi Granth* in 1604. It may be noted that the compilation of hymns made by Guru Amardas and known as *Mohan Pothi* also contains the compositions of many

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\* G. C. Narang: Transformation of Sikhism, p.33

\*\* Tara Chand: History of Freedom Movement in India, II, p.396



India Bhangats and saints.\* The reasons for the compilation of the *Mohan Porhi* were the demand for copies of hymns as the number of Sikhs was increasing and the need to exclude spurious anthologies of hymns containing *Kachi Bani* or fake compositions.

## SEPARATE SOCIAL PRACTICES

It must be noted that guru Amardas had earlier undertaken a crusade against the Hindu caste system. The institution of *langar* was one of the many steps intended to break the caste system and the taboos about purity of cooking. The Guru spoke boldly against the caste system: "This body is made of five elements. It is subject to hunger, thirst, joy, sorrow, birth and death. It perishes and no caste goes with the soul to the next world . . . The Guru recognises no caste".†

Guru Amardas opposed the practice of *Sati* among the widows. True *Satis* are those who honour their husbands in their hearts and not those who burn themselves on the funeral pyre. He said:

"Nanak, they are satis who die of the sheer shock of separation" (p.787). On the other hand, Guru Amardas favoured widow re-marriage, because he believed in family-life. He encouraged the Sikhs to have a marriage-partner after the death of their previous partner. Death is a natural phenomenon and as such it should be taken as a matter of course.

Guru Amardas believed in the uplift of women. He discouraged the practice of veiling among women. Sikh women were forbidden the covering of their faces both inside and outside the congregation.

Guru Amardas forbade 'drinking'. In one of his hymns, he exhorted his followers to avoid intoxicating wines and liquors. He wrote:

"One man brings a vessel filled with wine and fills a cup therefrom, by drinking which, intelligence departs and madness enters and man cannot distinguish between what is mine and yours and is accursed.

Drinking it, one forsakes one's Lord and is punished at His Court. Yes, drink not this vicious wine, under any circumstances" (p.554).

By devising new practices and rejecting the old and futile ones, Guru Amardas made Sikhism quite separate from Hinduism. As one writer puts it: "He wished to construct a fence to protect it from the

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\* Cole and Sambhi: The Sikhs, p.46

† Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, p.84



ancient Hindu faith". Thus his work and achievement is a turning point in the history of the Sikh Church.

### HIS CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY

Guru Amardas was essentially a man of peace and humility. When the Sikhs complained to him of the harassment caused to them by the Muslim residents of Goindwal, he advised them to remain patient. They broke the jars of Sikh women when they went to the village-well to fetch water. Again the Guru advised restraint and said: "It is not proper to take revenge". He avoided conflict with Datu, the son of Guru Angad and retreated to Basarkay. He forgave Datu who had kicked and abused him. He said to his followers: "If one ill-treats you, bear it for three times and God Himself will fight for you for the fourth time, and extirpate your enemy".\* He taught his Sikhs forbearance, self-control and compassion and reiterated the need of piety and devotion. His simplicity is evident from the fact that he kept only one spare dress for himself and gave away all other possessions in charity. Kalsahar Bhatt has called him Parbat Meran, that is, strong and firm in his patience like the Meru mountain in the Himalayas. The jealousies and the complaints of the caste-conscious Brahmins and Khatri and his refusal to pay them in the same coin show his saintly character. His enemies, in spite of their constant mischief, could not disturb his peace of mind.

Moreover, his devotion to Guru Angad and his love of *Sewa* for over eleven years won him the respect and admiration of the congregation. His sweet personality was amply reflected in his writings and the events of his life. He was an ideal man and matched up to his definition of the super-man found in one of his hymns:

"The ideal man, through the Guru, enjoys internally the statues of wedded wife and bears the Lord in his heart. For he who speaks sweetly and is humble in his ways, enjoys the bed of the Spouse" (p.31).

### TRIBUTES

Balwand and Satta, the musicians of the Guru's court, composed the following verses on Guru Amardas with whom they had intimate personal contact:

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\* Macauliffe: The Sikh Religion, II, p.70



**“He made divine knowledge his steed and chastity his saddle,  
On the brow of truth, he strung the arrow of God's praise.  
In the age of utter darkness, he rose like the Sun.  
He sowed the seed of Truth and reaped its fruit” (p.967).**

**Kalashar Bhatt paid his tribute to Guru Amardas as under:**

**“The Guru is the hero of Truth, powerful in humility, good-tempered, and with his holy congregation remains absorbed in the unimical Lord. The Guru's white standard of fortitude is seen on the bridge to the Lord's realm, from the very beginning” (p.1393).**

**Jalap Bhatt extolled the Guru in the following words:**

**“Seeing the Guru's vision, the disciple is blessed with the Lord's meditation, service, truth and contentment.**

**Whosoever seeks the Guru's refuge is liberated from the account of the city of death” (p.1394).**

**Sall Bhatt paid his tribute to the Third Guru as under:**

**“Holding the bow of faith in his hand, the Guru aimed the arrows of meditation and humility,**

**Being fear-free, with God in mind, the Guru plunged the spear of the Name and thereby,**

**He destroyed the five demons of lust, wrath, avarice, attachment and pride” (p.1396).**

**Bhikha Bhatt eulogised the Guru in the following words:**

**“He overpowers lust and wrath and his mind wanders not again; He abides in the realm of God and realises His will through His meditation” (p.1395).**

**During the last two hundred years, the contribution of Guru Amardas to the development of Sikh faith has been adequately recognized and appreciated.**

**C. H. Payne regarded the Guru as “a zealous preacher who gained many new followers”.\* Cunningham affirmed that Guru Amardas was “active in preaching and successful in obtaining converts. He found an attentive listener in the tolerant Akbar. He saved the infant church from early death by wholly separating the passive and recluse Udasis from**

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**\* C. H. Payne: A History of the Sikhs, p.31**



the regular Sikhs".\* Trumpp, a German scholar, who wrote a commentary on the *Adi Granth*, remarked: "His compositions are simple and clear".\*\* M. Latiff, a Muslim historian called him "a successful teacher" and further added that his "zeal in preaching combined with his genial habits and affable disposition secured for him many converts to the new faith".\*\*\* I. J. Bannerjee regarded his pontificate as a land-mark in the history of Sikhism and observed; "The Guru introduced a number of reforms and changes in the ceremonies connected with marriage and death".\*\*\*\*

So all in all, the contribution of Guru Amardas to the development of Sikhism has been both significant and permanent. He consolidated his followers into a distinct group and put Sikhism on the path of progress and fulfilment.

### III. HIS TEACHING AND PHILOSOPHY

#### SIKH WAY OF LIFE

The life of Guru Amardas is an example of how an ideal man lives in this world. His *Sewa* (voluntary and selfless service) of Guru Angad and the entire *Sangat* (congregation) which he did for a period of more than eleven years, is a model of holy and ideal living. The purpose of *Sewa* is the elimination of the ego, which is a hurdle in the way of universal love remembrance of God's Name. Ego has to be overcome through humility and works of charity. Even when the disciple does good deeds, worldly people criticise him. However, if he does not take to heart what others say and shows patience and practises forbearance, people will ultimately realise the value of his work and wisdom.

Guru Amardas' attitude to Datu – son of Guru Angad – is a great lesson for every Sikh. Datu kicked the Guru but the latter did not retaliate and quietly left the village. He never minded the apparent insult in the presence of the congregation. On the contrary, he showed exemplary patience and thus won the respect of his followers. Similarly his forbearance and humility in the face of hostility and aggression of Gond Marwaha, Tappa and the Brahmins of Goindwal is a testimony to his saintly nature. The story of Prema the leper whom he cherished and brought back to good health – and later got married – is an outstanding example of his benevolent disposition and his great compassion.

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\* J. D. Cunningham: A History of the Sikhs, p.45

\*\* E. Trumpp: *Adi Granth*, p.LXXIV

\*\*\* M. Latiff: *History of the Punjab*, p.250

\*\*\*\* I. J. Banerjee: *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol I, p.167



One day, Bhai Budha lovingly asked Guru Amardas on behalf of the *sangat*, to tell them of the Sikh discipline in daily life. The Guru replied as follows: "Listen, O Sikhs of the Guru! Get up early at dawn and take a bath. Then sit in a corner and collect your mind and recite the Holy name till sunrise with concentration. Then go about your daily work or profession and earn your living honestly. Do not tell lies or speak ill of others. Share your joys and sorrows with your fellow beings. Resign yourself to the will of God and do not find fault with the doings of the Creator. Do not run after transitory pleasures of this world. Give up deceit, jealousy, and covetousness. Always seek the company of the good and the virtuous. Mould your conduct according to the instructions of your religious guide".

## HIS PHILOSOPHY

Guru Amardas laid down the universal highway for every seeker of Truth. In this connection, I have given in this section quotations from the hymns of the Third Guru. Guru Amardas learnt the Sikh way of life from his predecessors and emphasised the important role of the Guru in guiding the discipline. Fortunately, we have now the permanent guidance of *Sri Guru Granth Sahab* which contains the message and the instructions of the Gurus.

(1) THE GURU: According to Guru Amardas, the Guru is a kind of boat or ship to ferry man across the world's tempestuous ocean, or a ladder for spiritual ascent. Guru Amardas says in this connection: "Imbued with the Name, the True Guru is the ship in the Dark Age" (p.552). "By serving the Guru, man saves his capital; the Guru is a ladder or boat of salvation. Nanak says, he who loves God receives the quintessence. The true Lord is attained through the true mind". (p.1279)

The Guru destroys the disciple's ego through humility and service: "Nanak says, by meeting the True Guru, man's self-will is destroyed, and the True Lord comes to dwell in his mind" (p.560).

"Without the Guru, man cannot perform Bhakti and cannot love the Holy Word" (p.1417).

"Divine knowledge and the jewel of *Naam* are obtained from the Guru; after subduing desire, the mind remains stable within" (p.1044).



The Guru holds the key to the spiritual treasure. Guru Amardas says in his connection:

“In the True Guru’s hand is the key. None else can open the door. By perfect good luck, the Guru is met” (p.124).

“Virtues are accumulated and vices disappear. With the Guru’s help, one merges in the Holy Word” (p.361).

Commenting on the Three-fold aspect of the Guru – God, the perfect man, the *Shabad* (Gurbani) – Guru Amardas concludes that all the three constitute a single Reality:

“There is one *Bani* (divine gospel) uttered by the only *Guru* and one *Shabad* (Holy Name) to reflect upon” (p.646).

“Everyone talks of bliss, but bliss is obtained through the Guru” (p.917).

“The perfect Guru showed me the Lord, and through the Guru’s hymns, I realised him” (p.592).

(2) SEWA: The Guru also teaches the disciple the true way of service of all creation, without any show or motive. The disciple must submit himself to the guidance and the will of the Guru:

“When one does the service of the Guru, the mind becomes pure and finds refuge in the true Home” (p.120).

“Through the service of the Guru, one gets real happiness, which cannot be found anywhere else” (p.548).

“Nanak says, if one follows the will of the Guru, one naturally merges in the Truth” (p.1249).

(3) UNIVERSAL LOVE: The Guru recognised the validity of all religions and revelations and prayed for universal welfare.

Guru Amardas says:

“O God, do save this burning world through Thy Grace, Save it by whatever way it can be saved” (p.853).

All men and women are equal, because they are the creation of the Lord:

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“From the Unique Lord come all forms and colours. The air, water and fire are kept together amongst all” (p.160).

“The whole world is made out of one clay, but the Potter has fashioned it into vessels of many kinds” (p.1128).

(4) **HOLY COMPANY (SADH-SANGAT):** The Company of the pious is beneficial to the disciple for his spiritual progress. The Guru calls mammon a snake and holy-men snake charmers. In the society of saints, man learns *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) and the secret or technique of *Naam Simaron* (Remembrance of the Holy Name). God's elixir is relished in the saint's congregation. The company of like-minded pious persons strengthens the devotee's conviction and provides him a lot of moral support in his spiritual effort. Guru Amardas says in this connection:

“Come dear saints, let us speak of the gospel of the Ineffable God” (p.918).

(5) **DETACHMENT:** Through the Sikh leads a family life, his mind does not get involved in worldly matters. He does not renounce the world, but rather its worldliness and mammon. Guru Amardas describes the life of the *Gurmukh* (God-orientated person) in the following words:

“The Guru-orientated becomes desireless and attain to supreme bliss. In house-hold, they remain unattached and imbibe affection for the Lord.

Sorrow and separation cling not to them and they remain happy in the Lord's Will.

Nanak says, they ever remain imbued with their God and He blends them with Himself” (p.1249).

The disciple does actions but they are done without the ego or the self and as such, these “detached” actions brings no reactions:

“He alone is above actions who reflects over the Guru's hymns. Within his mind is the divine knowledge and thereby he effaces his ego” (p.128).

## (6) SACRED NAME/KIRTAN

Guru Amardas affirms that the Holy Name is within man himself,



but its secret is imparted to him by the Guru. *Kirtan* or the singing of the glories of God dis-associated man from his physical environment and takes him to the inner conscious-ness. Since Kirtan is nothing but the Holy Name, man feels the presence of the Guru. Then the Guru takes him to the *Shabad* and thus the meditation of the Holy Name produces a inner joy, which is called *Amrit rasa* or *Har rasa*.

The Guru says:

“Imbued with the Lord’s nectar, I now easily sing His praise and my tongue utters the Lord’s Name” (p.1049).

The tongue tastes the Lord’s nectar, the mind is drenched with the Lord’s love, and the mortal medicines on the True Name.

The inner well is brimful with the Lord’s ambrosia. Through the Name’s mediational, the tongue draws and drinks it” (p.570).

Guru Amardas realised that bliss is obtained by singing the Lord’s praise and His glory:

“Within the minds of devotees is bliss. They are imbued with the love of the True Lord.

Night and day, they ever sing the praises of the Pure One and are easily absorbed in the Praiseworthy Lord” (p.122).

“In the minds of such friends of God is bliss. They reflect over the Guru’s hymns,

They enshrine the Name of their minds, their pain is dispelled and the Creator blesses them with Divine Light” (p.549).

God’s Name is the sweetest delicacy. It removes all sorrows. It is the surest way to salvation:

“O my Soul, supremely sweet is God’s Name.

It is the destroyer of sins and fears of millions of births. By the Guru’s grace, the Unique Lord is seen” (p.1233).

“Let some one see and study the Shastras and Simiritis, Without the Name, none is emancipated” (p.229).

But one must understand the *Shabad* and reflect on it and put it into practice:

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“Within this body are the nine treasures of the Name and they are attained by reflecting on the Guru’s word” (p.754).

“Many melodies of joy play for one in whose mind the Lord’s Name abides” (p.917).

The benefits of meditation on the Holy Name or the singing of hymns are significant. *Firstly*, just as soap removes dirt, in the same way, the Holy Name washes clean the inner consciousness of man. *Secondly*, it smoothenes the path of *Sadhana* and helps in the life of service, piety and noble action. The disciple carries out his daily chores with a sense of peace and joy.

### (7) DEVOTION AND HUMILITY

Devotion is nothing but love and respect for the Guru and the Holy Name. The devotion finds expression in conduct and action. Look at Guru Amardas’ love of Guru Angad. Even while accidentally stumbling on a stormy wintry night, he minded the pail of water meant for the bath of his Guru. He thought of his beloved Guru then, instead of his own fall or injury. Guru Amardas says: “If one forgets the Beloved for a moment, what kind of devotional service is it;

One whose body and soul are soothed by the True Name never allows his breath to go to waste” (p.35).

The disciple surrenders his all - body, mind and soul - to the Guru and the Lord:

“Surrender your body, soul and wealth to the Guru and submit to his Will to win the Lord” (p.918).

### (8) DIVINE GRACE

Without God’s grace, the devotee’s efforts may not succeed. Man does his best to please the Lord and yet not get near Him. Sikhism is essentially a religion of grace. *Sadhana* or spiritual effort or what is called *Kamaee* has to be blessed by the Lord in order to bear fruit. Man may sow the seed, water the plant and supervise the crop, but what harvest can he reap if there is flood or snow:

“If an account is called for, by God, who could satisfy Him?  
Accounting cannot bring any satisfactory result.

The True Lord Himself grants pardon and having forgiven blends



Himself" (p.111).

"By God's grace, the mortal serves the Guru and through God's grace, the service is performed.

By God's grace, the mind is controlled, and by His grace the mind becomes pure" (p.558).

God in His grace can awaken a sleeping mortal and give him enlightenment and wisdom:

"He who has made the mortal sleep shall awaken him. By the Guru's instructions he obtains understanding" (p.112).

When the disciple serves the perfect Lord, he gradually imbibes His virtues and walks in His Way:

"If you walk according to His Will, you shall be like Him whom you serve" (p.549).

#### (9) FINAL STAGE: BLISS/UNION

In *Anand Sahab*, Guru Amardas has given in detail the gospel of bliss and the means to achieve it. *Firstly*, he has pointed to the hurdles that lie in the way and which have to be crossed. These hurdles are: argumentation, worldly wisdom, neglect of higher values, ritual, falsehood, hypocrisy, duality, greed, avarice, ego - in short the manifestations of maya. The responsibility of the family and professional career and commitment to the community are real challenges to test the mettle of man. *Secondly*, the Guru has mentioned certain positive steps which the disciple has to take in order to develop his spiritual side. The association with the Guru, the sincerity of *Sadhana*, selfless service, the company of the holy, the performance of, or listening to *Kirtan* or *Gurbani*, the relish of *Nam rasa*, the direction of organs of perception and organs of action like eyes, ears, the tongue and others to higher goals, and finally the acceptance of God's Will are some of the necessary steps towards the earning of God's grace. When the *Sahaj stage* or *Dasam duar* or *Turiya* is attained, all sorrows and maladies vanish, the fear of death is overcome and divine melody is heard within, and ineffable joy is experienced. The devotee shines with an inner radiance and wisdom which make him feel the presence of God within himself. He is *Jiwan-mukt* - liberated while alive - and he merges in the Ocean of Bliss:

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**"Some rare Guru - ward becomes emancipated in life . . . He easily blends with Him, the True God" (p.232).**

**Merger in the Infinite is the final goal of human life. It is difficult to describe this condition. Like a dumb man who cannot tell the taste of a sweet fruit after eating it, the devotee - intoxicated with the divine nectar - cannot depict the state of bliss, because it is beyond the experience of the physical senses.**

**"He who soars above the nine gates (organs) and hears the playing of the celestial melody in the Tenth gate is liberated" (p.110).**

**"Their hearts remain saturated with God's elixir and their mental pride is destroyed:**

**Their mind-lotus blooms and their meditation is dissolved in the Lord" (p.26).**

**Guru Amardas relates his own experience of the state of beatitude in the following words:**

**"There, one neither sleeps nor hungers; he lives in peace in the true Nectar - Name of God;**

**Nanak says, pain and pleasure cling not to man; there is the illumination of the All-Pervading Soul" (p.1414).**







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